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## Comment Form

## STATE DEPARTMENT

Title: Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000: Hague Convention; agency accreditation and person approval

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## How To Comment:

Commenters may send hard copy submissions or comments in electronic format. Commenters sending only hard copies must send an original and two copies referencing docket number State/AR-01/96 to: U.S. Department of State, CA/OCS/PRI, Adoption Regulations Docket Room, SA-29, 2201 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20520. Hard copy comments may also be sent by overnight courier services to: U.S. Department of State, CA/OCS/PRI, Adoption Regulations Docket Room, 2201 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20520. Do not personally hand deliver comments to the Department of State. Comments referencing the docket number State/AR-01/96 may be submitted electronically to [adoptionregs@state.gov](mailto:adoptionregs@state.gov). Two hard copies of the comments submitted electronically must be mailed under separate cover as well. The electronic comments or the hard copy comments must be received by the date noted above in the date section of this proposed rule. Comments must be made in the text of the message or submitted as a Word file avoiding the use of any form of encryption or use of special characters. If you submit comments by hard copy rather than electronically, include a disk with the submission if possible. Hard copy submissions without an accompanying disk file, however, will be accepted.

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## Comment

It is my understanding that it is illegal to bribe a foreign official, yet unofficial rumors in the adoption community suggest that at least in Eastern Europe some of the facilitator's "fees" go to "grease the skids" so to speak to encourage officials to do your paperwork (the job they are supposed to be doing anyway). The adoptions are totally legal, the children are really abandoned, it's just that in order to get the adoptive parent's paperwork processed, certain favors are expected. I would like to see the State Department do something to encourage each and every agency to sign an affidavit.....or something.....guaranteeing that their foreign operatives (either their own employees or contractors) don't give any of the money to foreign officials except whatever fees are publically required, such as filing fees, etc. If this practice could be stopped the high costs of foreign adoption should go down dramatically. I know there are "fee for service" provisions in the regulations, but a lot of agencies take the position that they cannot control the high cost of their foreign facilitators. Yet presumably "their" facilitators would be violating U.S. and probably other countries' laws by giving out "donations" to officials involved in the process. I would like to see the State Department work closely with foreign governments and with agencies themselves to shut down the practice of foreign officials holding their hands out for "fees" to do the jobs they are supposed to be doing anyway. I imagine most agencies would be relieved if these practices were to be halted. This might be implicit in the regulations, but I'd like to see an explicit provision such as at the end of every adoption requiring the agency to certify that neither they nor any of their operatives abroad gave any of the adoptive parents' money to foreign officials. If no one was allowed to do it (and the State Department threatened action against those who did), then no one would do it, and everyone would benefit.